

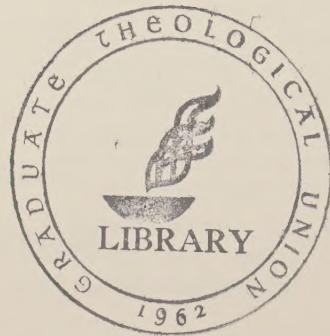


VI

No. 3

Leaves of Healing

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Tests of Faith

by Rev. Roger W. Ottersen

ews 11 is the great "faith" in the Bible. Verses 8-19 pertain to the life of Abraham, the "father of the faithful" for Christians, and Muslims. Four times in this section the words, "by faith", or "through faith" occur, indicating for us four major tests of faith that Abraham experienced in his walk with God. They are similar to modern day tests of faith experienced by believers, "were written for our instruction".

The first test, indicated in verse 8, is "the test of the unknown". The scripture simply says, "by faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a land which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out knowing where he went." God commanded Abraham to leave his home town and go to a place that God would show him at the time of his call. Abraham knew nothing of the place that God had in mind—but he knew God. At that time he knew God sufficiently to know that God was God and that He was to be obeyed. This was a test of faith—to obey or to disobey. He was obeyed!

Today Christians are today faced with the call of God to leave the familiar, the comfortable and secure surroundings and start out to new fields of endeavor. It may be school, or home, or work, or service, but it is a definite call from God and

they are faced with the test of the unknown. Though Abraham did not know where he was going, he had confidence that God knew and that He was able to lead him safely there.

The story is told of a rural pastor who went to visit one of his farmer parishioners. He noticed a weather-vane on top of the barn with the words printed on the arrow, "God is love". When the farmer approached him, the pastor asked the significance of the wording on the weathervane. The farmer replied, "It is a reminder to me that no matter which way the wind blows, God is love."

Paul no doubt had this in mind when he wrote, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." He didn't say that every situation or experience is good, but that God works it for good. Following God is often neither glamorous nor spectacular, but as we follow His leading, we are guided aright and we experience peace:

The next test of Abraham's faith is indicated in verses 9 and 10:

"By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise;

For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

I would call this, "the test of delay".

God promised to Abraham, who had no children, the great land of Palestine as a gift for his innumerable descendants. Yet throughout his lifetime, the only land Abraham owned was a small burying site for his wife, which he purchased with money. He looked for a city, but ever dwelt in tents, a nomad until the day of his death. He was promised descendants as the stars of heaven for multitude, yet waited years for his first and only son, through Sarah.

Have you been experiencing this "test of delay"? Have you in prayer claimed a promise from the Lord, yet have waited weeks, months, or perhaps years without seeing its fulfillment?

Mary and Martha sent word to the Lord that their brother Lazarus was very sick and to come quickly or he would die. Jesus delayed His coming and Lazarus died. How sad! Jesus could have healed him. This was a severe test of faith to Mary and Martha, for they knew that Jesus loved Lazarus and could have healed him. In time Jesus did go to Lazarus. It was not too late though Lazarus had been buried for several days. He called Lazarus forth from the tomb as a living demonstration that He Himself is the resurrection and the life.

I am reminded of a lovely little lady who experienced the great test of delay in the salvation of her husband. For thirty years she prayed for him and all

during that time he refused to attend church or to read the Bible. Then it happened. He met Jesus and his life was transformed. The dear wife said, "Pastor Ottersen, I knew all along that he was going to come to Christ."

Remember, God has purposes for delay which we must accept by faith, but He is faithful. Don't give up!

Abraham's next test was what I would call "the test of the impossible". It is indicated in verses 11 and 12:

"Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised."

"Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, as many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the seashore innumerable."

God had promised a son to Abraham and Sarah, yet the years passed with no sign of a son. They became very discouraged and thought it best to help God out by the use of Sarah's handmaid, Hagar. Though Abraham actually had a son by Hagar, God rejected him as the heir and confirmed His promise of a son by Abraham and Sarah. When Abraham reached the ripe old years of one hundred and Sarah that of ninety, God performed a miracle, renewing their physical vigor, and gave them a son.

Our God is the God of the impossible. The angel of the Lord reminded Mary of this when he announced to her that she would become the mother of the Son of God. Speaking of a similar miracle to that of Abraham and Sarah, the angel said:

"And, behold, thy cousin, Elisabeth, hath also conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren."

For with God, nothing is impossible." (Luke 1:36, 37)

"With God nothing shall be impossible" is the message we need to hear when we face what seems like impossible situations. This was the message Jeremiah needed to hear for his own life and ministry, and God spoke it to him.

"Then the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah, saying, Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh; is there anything too hard for me?"

Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not." (Jeremiah 32:27, 28, 33:3)

What impossible situations do you

face today? Is it an unbelieving husband, wife or child? Is it a work situation that you feel you just can't cope with any longer? Is it a losing battle of finances for the needs of your family? Remember God's word to Abraham, to Jeremiah, and to Mary.

Abraham experienced many tests of faith in his walk with God, but the greatest came when Isaac was about twelve years of age. How eagerly and with what joy Abraham and Sarah had watched him grow through infancy into childhood. Every new word he learned and every improvement in some skill must have brought them great pleasure. As he was passing from childhood into manhood, God personally tested Abraham's faith to the very limit. Verses 17-19 of Hebrews 11 tells how Abraham met that test. The full story is found in Genesis 22 which should be read to get the full impact of the test.

"By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

Of whom it was said, In Isaac shall thy seed be called;

Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which also he received him in a figure."

(Hebrews 11:17-19)

After promising a son to Abraham and Sarah "whose descendants would be as the stars of the heavens for number", and following a delay of many years, giving that son, then to tell Abraham to offer that son as a sacrifice, must have come as a great test of faith. This test I would call "the test of an apparent contradiction". What questions must have come into Abraham's mind, and what searchings of heart. We do not know why this test was given, though we do know that all of the Bible was written for our learning. We also know that Abraham obeyed. Without an argument, he made arrangements for the wood and the journey.

When they came in sight of the place of offering, Abraham told his servants to wait while he and Isaac offered the sacrifice. As Isaac, carrying the wood, and Abraham, carrying the pot of fire and a knife, walked toward the spot, Isaac seems to have become a little uneasy. He said to his father, "Behold the fire and the wood but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" Abraham replied, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering."

God did provide—a ram, caught in a thicket, to take the place of Isaac, later the "Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world".

As Isaac submitted himself to his father and allowed himself to be bound and laid upon the wood for a burnt sacrifice to God, so later, the Son of God submitted Himself to the Father's will to become the great sacrifice for the sins of the world. Abraham believed the promise of God concerning posterity even if it meant the raising of Isaac from the dead.

This test of an apparent contradiction was not only experienced by Abraham and Isaac, but much later in the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. In agony of soul, Jesus cried out, "My God, my God, Why have you forsaken me?" Jesus who was sinless, was condemned on the cross for sin and as a sinner. Viewing that from our perspective, it only lead us to echo John Newton's great song:

*Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.*

Many years ago I was going through a difficult time in my life. I was wondering why the Lord delayed answering what I felt to be an urgent request. To my thinking it was a priority. About that time I received a letter with a copy of the following poem in it. This poem really altered the course of my life. It goes like this:

My Father's way may twist and turn,
My heart may throb and ache,
But in my soul I'm glad I know,
He maketh no mistake.

My cherished plans may go astray.
My hopes may fade away,
But still I'll trust my Lord to lead
For He doth know the way.

Tho' night be dark and it may seem
That day will never break;
I'll pin my faith, my all in Him,
He maketh no mistake.

There's so much now I cannot see,
My eyesight's far too dim;
But come what may, I'll simply trust
And leave it all to Him.

For by and by the mist will lift
And plain in all He'll make.
Through all the way, tho' dark to me,
He made not one mistake.

—A.M. O.

Are you just now facing a severe test of faith? Remember God is faithful and will never allow you to be tried beyond your strength (I Corinthians 10:13). God has a purpose in everything though we may not understand the purpose. Sometimes God tests our faith that we may grow stronger in Him and be of greater service for His cause.

times He tests us that we might know His sufficiency for every At times He tests our faith as a linary action, to draw us away the attraction of the world and to self.

One good effect of the trials of faith is a strengthened prayer life. When are we likely to pray the most earnestly? Is it not when we are experiencing a great problem or struggle? When all is going well, our prayer life has a tendency to get relaxed and out of condition.

Tests of faith are good for us. Through them God works in our lives for good—both for our own benefit as well as for the benefit of others. Above all remember that the God of Abraham is our God—forever.

Gleanings From Joshua

Part 3

Twelve Stones

by Rev. Earl L. Minton

and Joshua set up twelve stones in mid-st of the Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests who bore the ark of the covenant stood; and are there unto this day."

Joshua 4:9

"...o piles of stones, taken from the st part of the Jordan River, were the priests' feet stood firm", erected, one on the shore where encamped, and the other right the priests had stood in the mid- of the river. Both piles were made exactly twelve stones, "according the number of the tribes of the en of Israel". The pile of stones e shore could always be seen and for a memorial of the grace and of God in parting the river, and the children of Israel crossing by unto the other side.

The other pile was never to be seen . They are hidden forever, ed by the waters of the River. No nation is given for Joshua's setting them up, nor are they referred to in Scripture. Yet we are told that these things happened unto them examples (or types), and they are en for our admonition, upon the ends of the ages are come" (Corinthians 10:11). As we know, of the Old Testament awaited extion by the New Testament. In case we find a little incident, seem insignificant, a parable of great rtance, made clear by the ings of the Pauline Epistles.

the children of Israel had now come forty years in the wilderness. All g this time they had manifest a , rebellious, and ungrateful t. In recording their y during that time, God could ay, "Forty years long was I grieved with this generation. It is a people

that do err in their hearts, and they have not known my ways" (Psalm 95:10). Despite all of God's miraculous provisions for them of food, water, health and protection, and His wondrous grace in revealing Himself to them in fire and smoke on Mt. Sinai and in the giving of the Law and the Tabernacle, they were a people more fit for judgment than for blessing. What an accurate picture this is of the sinful, fleshly nature of us all. "The flesh profiteth nothing", is the verdict of Jesus (John 6:63). "It is corrupt" and as God in judgment buried the corrupt world in a flood of waters in Noah's day, so our old nature needs to be "put off", or "buried".

The picture before us is that of Israel, better fit for judgment than for mercy, nevertheless crossing the Jordan River by faith (in the Ark of the Covenant) under the leadership of Joshua (whose name means "Jehovah is salvation"). Twelve stones, representing the entire company of Israel, were then placed in the deep part of the river bed, never to be seen again, as a symbol of the putting away of their sins and of their new life of faith. Had God dealt with them in accordance to their merits, they all would have perished, but God gave them the land "by promise" and as a gift. They received it by faith.

Where the Ark had for a brief time rested, there Israel in sin and unbelief was to remain forever, symbolized by the twelve stones. In like manner, we are "buried with Christ". When Christ died for our sins and was buried, we were united with Him. He rose again, but in the place of His burial, our sins and our old nature are said to remain buried. We too, have risen with Him in newness of life, sharing the power of His resurrection for a life pleasing unto God. Paul testified, "I am (lit. "was") crucified with Christ" (Gal. 2:20).

Burial is the putting out of sight that which should not be seen. Jesus took our sins with Him to the cross and to the tomb. Our sins have been buried with Him, never to be seen or mentioned by God again. They are out of His sight—buried and forgotten. Through Jesus Christ the guilt of our sin has been removed and forgiveness has been complete. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1).

The twelve stones, buried in the Jordan River not only beautifully symbolize the burial of our sins and guilt, but also of the fact that we, ourselves are represented as dead and buried and as risen with Christ. The twelve stones most accurately represent the persons of Israel and not just their sins. The sixth chapter of Romans deals with this theme in great detail. We are said to be "dead to sin", "baptized into His (Jesus') death", "buried with Him", and that "our old man (nature) is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin". Being dead, we are "freed from sin". Sin's power over our lives has been broken by our union with Christ.

Three verses in Romans 6 indicate the steps in applying this great truth to our lives. Step one is found in verse 6.

"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."

We must first know of God's provision for us before we can appropriate it for our lives. Next comes the step of faith—acting on what God has promised. This is indicated in the word, "reckon", found in verse eleven:

"Likewise, reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ, our Lord."

The next step is to make a practice of moment by moment giving our lives and bodies to the Lord—an attitude of commitment to Jesus Christ and a dependence on Him for guidance, strength, wisdom, grace, and help for every situation and need.

"Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."

The Christian need not serve sin. Sin's power has been broken for the believer. However, God allows each believer to choose whether he will live by faith or to continue in his own futile efforts. Our best efforts at righteousness in God's sight are as filthy rags. The heart of man is desperately wicked. The flesh is cor-

rupt and there is nothing we can do in our own strength to please God.

Both our sins and our persons were nailed with Jesus to the cross and both were united with Him in burial. With Christ, we have been raised from the dead to newness of life. We have become in Him new creations—with a new nature—a spiritual nature which is of God. However, our old sinful nature can at any moment be brought out of the place of burial and we can very easily come under its power if we choose to live in the flesh—or if we neglect God's provision through the Holy Spirit for living a life pleasing unto Him. That is why Paul also urges us to "make no provision for the flesh to fulfill its lusts".

The choice is yours!

The Importance of Records in Christian Education

By Pastor Hugh Mainord

When one begins a new ministry in a church (as I am doing) immediately he is reminded afresh of the importance of a good records system.

First he asks for a church directory so that he can familiarize himself with the names (and hopefully the faces) of those he will serve. How confused and slow he would be without such records! Next he asks for a list of church leaders (as deacons, trustees, Sunday school teachers) with their addresses and phone numbers, knowing that he will have frequent contact with these and will need to know them and how to contact them. But what would he do without such records?

Then as he begins to attend activities of different age groups he feels more comfortable if he can get a list of the names, addresses, and phone numbers of those in the group. Frequent reference to such a list helps him to soon call them by name as individuals rather than just saying, "Hey, you . . ." And the more he knows about each one, the more effectively he can minister.

"People" records are especially important because they show that we care about them as individuals. We are not just interested in a head count. We are interested in the whole individual. It is a way of saying, "I care about you. You are important."

Yet, many Sunday schools have little or no "people" records. When we ask a visitor to fill out information about himself so that we can introduce him, call him, visit him, invite him to various activities, we are showing that we *care* - he is not just a number or a chair filler. When we enroll regular attenders and ask their address, phone number, date of birth, church membership (if any), school, school grade, occupation, business address, parents' names, names of others in family, etc. we are showing that they are important and their *needs* are important. With this information we can better minister to them. Every teacher should want this information about those he teaches.

We also have "people" records so we can know their attendance. If we just resort to memory, we can soon overlook a person so that he is not missed, not called, not visited. But if we record the attendance of each person, we can discover who the negligent teachers are and the students who likely need to feel missed when they are absent. A phone call says "we missed you" and may reveal an illness or some serious problem about which we should be concerned as a teacher. And frequent absenteeism likely means a visit is needed. Often there is a spiritual problem that is discovered more readily

the Sunday school teacher who checks the attendance record of his class taught by the pastor who cannot necessarily miss him just by looking out over congregation. Too, the absent student will usually feel closer to the teacher than he will to the pastor since he has more contact with him on a personal basis.

Therefore, as we seek to strengthen the record system at the Christ the Catholic Church, it is just to make more people aware of their responsibility to *care* and for every person who comes into our midst to know that *someone* does care about him.

The record system will help us know each other better, minister to each other more faithfully, discover new prospects, evaluate our own work, discovering our own strengths and weaknesses. We'll soon know which individuals are not enrolled in any Bible study program, not attending those enrolled (and often having a serious physical or spiritual problem that needs our concern and visits). We'll discover which departments and classes are growing and which are stagnating. We'll be able to order supplies more efficiently. We'll be able to plan for promotion day more efficiently. We'll be doing a better job overall when we have our records. And above all, we'll be able to *care* more deeply and the people in our community will begin to sense that we really do *care*. When that happens we'll grow because most people like a church that *cares*.

LOVE

*EVERYBODY TALKS ABOUT IT, AND
EVERYBODY NEEDS IT, BUT
WHO GIVES IT?*

"God is love!"
Christ is love!

*"Love is patient." Am I?
"Love is kind." Am I?
"Love is not jealous." Am I jealous?
"Love does not brag." Do I?
"Love is not arrogant." Am I?
"Love does not act unbecomingly." Do I?
"Love does not seek its own." Do I?
"Love is not provoked." Do we get irritated easily?
"Love does not take into account a wrong suffered." Do we hold grudges?
"Love does not rejoice in unrighteousness. Do I?
"Love rejoices with the truth." Do I?
"Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."
How much do I?
"LOVE NEVER FAILS." How easily do I?
"GOD IS LOVE!" We can rejoice in that!*

MISSIONS

"So we ourselves ought to support such people . . . to be fellow workers with them in the truth." *III John 8.*

For Praise
& Prayer

ANGOLA, AFRICA

Letter from Darrell
and Barbara Hockersmith

C.P. 33, Lubango
Rep. Pop. de ANGOLA
February 12, 1980

Dear C.C.C. Friends,

Due to irregular mail service, most of our Christmas mail reached us the last two weeks of January. It greatly encouraged us to hear from so many. Often we have prayed for you and your ministries as you do for us and we never cease to marvel at the host of wonderful friends and co-workers that God has given us.

In answer to your prayers and that of many others, we **REJOICE** that the AEF-Mission house here in Lubango, in which our former Field Director, Don Lutes, lived, has been returned to us—minus many things—after having been held by the Secret Police for a year and a half. After Christmas, much time has been spent trying to make order out of chaos, clean the house and move (three blocks from where we were). Though much remains to be done, we are comfortably settled in the upstairs apartment and are more than grateful for the privacy we enjoy and the marvel of once again having the home.

January 21st found us on a four-day retreat with our AEF-Mission family in Angola. The Lord wonderfully provided two beach-side homes on the beautiful, rugged Atlantic coast near Benguela. We thank God for meeting with us as we studied His Word and prayed and played together. To be away from the pressures of daily demands was refreshing and we thank God for this "break."

Darrell continues to visit the different churches within a 200 mile radius to counsel, help and encourage the believers who carry on under very difficult circumstances. We often wonder just how much a person can endure physically, mentally and emotionally as we listen to story after story of suffering and hardship.

Due to the pressure of other work, Darrell has not found the time to

prepare lessons in Portuguese for the TEE (Theological Education by Extension) program, thus the starting date of January 15th has had to be postponed. Please pray for wisdom, strength and time for this needful ministry. He has to fit in two weeks of Bible teaching at Kalukembe and we have been asked to give two weeks of ministry to the church in Huambo. Our co-workers, Walt and Lois Zigrang have been with us for two weeks and as visitors come and go, we marvel how God performs miracles in supplying us with staple food supplies: meat, fish, eggs, fruit and vegetables. Rain has been scarce, but during this past week, we have had more than we previously had for the past two months. There has been an escalation in war activity, hunger exists throughout the whole country, faithful church people have been imprisoned, yet we carry on our normal activities. Continue to **PRAY** for Christians here.

With the return of our Mission house, it is an encouragement for the Fil-African Mission of Switzerland to proceed with efforts to repossess the "Lar." Great concern continues for the need of a full time worker for the Christian bookstore in Huambo.

Much thanks was given to God at the Lubango Church's annual meeting (which also included the four suburban branch churches) for increased attendance, blessings in the Sunday school, Children's Church (175 children), generous giving, buildings enlarged or constructed, blessings through the ministry of the choir, faithful young people and workers. As we look to God for 1980, we pray for more workers and more to be won to Christ.

THANKFULLY, we praise God for meeting the debit on our Air Freight goods, having full support for 1979, and for meeting each need.

On January 10th we received the wonderful box of two fruit cakes, dried fruit and Kool-aid. It was all so very GOOD - such a surprise, and SO GREATLY ENJOYED AND APPRECIATED. We also received the 1980 calendars, birthday cards, letters, etc., etc., for which we say a big THANK YOU!

Darrell left with the Zigrangs about 10:30 this morning, first to Kalumbe, then on to Huambo. He will hope to return to Kalukembe tomorrow evening as it is not safe travelling that road after dusk. So many vehicles have been attacked and story after story of shots through the arms, legs and of some being killed. He will teach on Thursday and Friday morning then return home Friday evening.

Again thanks for everything. The letters, pictures, Leaves of Healing and other things have meant so much. Keep praying for us and for the believers in this land.

Lovingly in Him,
Darrell and Barbara Hockersmith



Navajo

Inscription House Navajo Mission -
Rev. Bernard Reimer

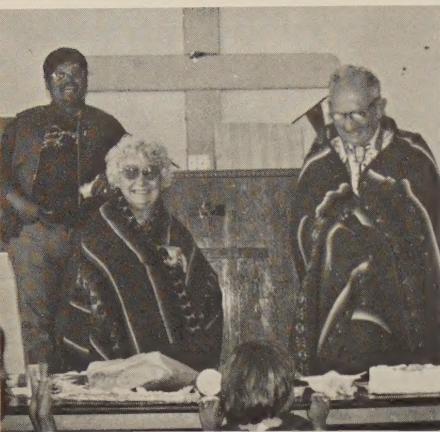
Dear Roger, Earl, and Friends,

Guess it's about time I wrote you of all the happenings here at the Inscription House Navajo Mission.

First I'll mention that the roads are at their usual worst. We have had a foot of snow twice since Christmas, then 3 to 4 inches more just last week. Instead of getting very cold, with sub-zero temperatures for January, it warmed up and we had a couple of Spring rain storms. This melted most of the snow, leaving the roads in a mess like only Inscription House can have. Our church attendance has been cut because of terrible road conditions.

The Ford Van is still on the blink, which leaves only our Blazer to drive for everything.

Enclosed are some pictures Leroy Nez took of a few of our highlights since we got back from the Zion Convocation. One shows Edna and myself, with our Pendleton Indian blankets. These were a couple of the gifts we received from the members of our church at our 40th wedding anniversary. We had a wonderful time.



Reimer's 40th Anniversary gifts of matching Navajo blankets. Jerry Begay is in the background.



Harvest Festival 1979 with home grown vegetables and flowers.

The pictures of the corn, squash, melons, flowers, and other things are all items raised in the Inscription House area. We had them on display for our November Harvest Festival and Thanksgiving season. The flowers and Oklahoma wheat are from Mrs. Reimer's garden.

After Thanksgiving comes the shortest time of year at the mission. Getting ready for the Christmas season, the bags from Zion, candy treats for everyone, the program, decorations everywhere, Christmas trees fixed, our big Christmas dinner, and so forth.

Without Deb-b's help we just couldn't make it. We are all very exhausted after December!

Mr. and Mrs. Barton were here for the Christmas program, and helped

with the last minute preparations. It turned out real good, with over two hundred very enthusiastic people in attendance.

We had two pale faces in our children's choir this year. They live at the trading post. (Devon and Alyx Townsend)

Deb-b and the youth group have been busy selling Navajo tacos, hot dogs, cupcakes, popcorn, and banana splits. They are building up the fund for their hopeful trip to Zion this summer.

New Year's Eve came with six inches of snow on the ground and very thick fog outside. Still had about 125 people to see the old year out and the new year in. The evening was spent singing, giving testimonies, a short message from our two Navajo pastors and myself, then we listened to the New Year's

greeting sent us from General Overseer Ottersen. We all enjoyed his message very much. Just before midnight we had a prayer time and then had coffee and sweet rolls before going home.

I took some folks home after the service about 1:00 a.m. The roads being so icy, and such thick fog out, I managed to hit a horse on my way home. Over \$400 damage to the Blazer, but no one was hurt, not even the horse. We thank the Lord for that. Got the Blazer fixed the very next week, and our insurance covered it all.

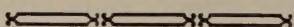
The small Sunday School classes, and the youth group are two of the bright spots in our church fellowship.

Recently, we had a board meeting and discussed having a week's evangelistic meetings in early Spring. It seems that this might be our greatest need. With family problems as never before, Chapter House disunity causing many hard feelings and there are many young married men with drinking problems (this caused by the many bars so near the reservation).

These and other problems seem so great, that one feels helpless to do much about it. The verses in Isaiah 40:29-31, seem to have more meaning for us as the years slip by so fast.

In closing, we wish to thank all of you for your cards, letters, and gifts during this Christmas season. Please continue to pray for us here at Inscription House and Kaibeto.

Sincerely,
The Reimer's



Another letter from Clark Offner dated February 16th:

Dear Roger,

It's Saturday afternoon. I have just turned on the television to watch the Olympics telecast from Lake Placid while I write this letter. Nagoyans are concerned about the future of the Olympics, since this city is hoping to host the 1988 summer games.

Pastor Tomita continues to teach classes in the church daily and is a sound, faithful preacher. However there is a lack of warm, loving fellowship in the church which he is trying to rectify. At our Takahama Church, we have two young people attending our weekly instruction class. We are looking into the matter of purchasing chairs for the church there.

We are hoping that our next mail will bring word that Barb's 80 year old

Excerpts of Letters From Our Missionaries:

Letter dated January 22nd from Clark Offner:

Dear Roger,

Thank you for your New Year's Greeting tape. I appreciated the choice of the 1980 Watchword. I think it is a good one.

Please give the office staff our greetings and thank them for their contributions to the tape. We enjoyed hearing from each one of them.

I attended the annual Hayama Missionary Men's Seminar a couple of weeks ago on "The Christian Gospel and its Ethical Implications for Japanese society". I was a part of the planning committee for the seminar this year and we feel it was a good one.

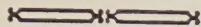
Some 70 missionary men in attendance.

The response to our New Year's morning Worship Service (January 1, 8:00 a.m.) was good. That may be an easier time than midnight for most of our fellowship. Our Annual Meeting is scheduled for March 30, at which time our two fellowships may become independent. We are preparing budgets with that possibility in mind.

Sincerely in Christ, Clark

mother is back home (from her second emergency hospitalization in the past month because of her heart ailment.)

Sincerely yours in Christ, Clark



Letter dated January 22nd
from Overseer Noel Smith, Australia:

Dear Brother Roger, Peace to Thee!

I am still rejoicing in the blessings of Convocation 79. What a grand time it was!

The Christmas season has come and gone; and we are now moving on in 1980, and already God is blessing the work in Australia. The Christmas services in both churches were very good, and very well attended, the spirit was good, and blessings were received by all. On Christmas morning both churches combined at Mr. Evelyn at 9:30 a.m. I led this service, and the church was full, with lots of visitors attending, as well as those of our own; a wonderful spirit was evident and the service was very successful, with many people inquiring about our church.

Many of our people have been away on holidays for the last three to four weeks, but in spite of this, our attendances at services has still been good. We have had services right through the Christmas and holiday season and people whose churches close, have come to our meetings.

At the "Watchnight Service", which was also combined at Mt. Evelyn, there were 31 present, which considering that so many were away, was very good. Thank you for the New Year's message, it was a joy for all to hear. It was included in the Watchnight service.

Thank you again for the calendars, prayer calendars, "This We Believe" booklets, October Leaves of Healing, bumper stickers and welcome buttons. All have arrived safely. All these are greatly appreciated and very useful.

Another family has joined the church at Mr. Evelyn. Enclosed are their applications for membership, with my recommendation. I am glad to have these people as members, and thank God for them. They all have talents that can be used for Him in our church.

God bless you in your ministry; be assured of our love and prayers; regards to all in Zion.

Faithfully in Jesus,
Overseer Noel Smith

Another letter dated February 19th
from Overseer Noel Smith, Australia:

Dear Roger,

I was pleased to receive the November issue of "Leaves of Healing" last week. It was good to relive the blessings of Convocation '79 as we read the articles and viewed the pictures.

The "This We Believe" booklets are proving to be very popular and are going like hot cakes. I have had several requests as a result of the Radio program and others are asking for them too. I wondered if it would be possible to have another 30 or 40 copies, please, if so I would appreciate it.

I have held several special planning meetings with the male officers and Board of Trustees. Together, we have, under the guidance of the Lord and the help of the Holy Spirit, made certain plans for the year. Activity calendars have been prepared and set up in both churches for all to see. Each month both churches have a separate planning meeting of their own to plan and discuss improvements for each work and each quarter we will be having a special combined Officers Prayer meeting for the work plus a combined Officers Planning meeting. From this we are praying that God will lead us and help us to set up some definite goals for the expansion of the work in Australia.

Greet all at Zion for us and be assured of our loving thoughts and prayers for you all.

Your brother in Christ,
Overseer Smith



Letter dated February 9th
from Elder Arthur Murton, England:

Dear Brother in Christ,

Peace to thee! I want to thank you once again for the Christmas gift. It was very helpful to me. I believe that I told you the books "This We Believe" have arrived. I should be very pleased if you could let me have some more.

God willing and by His leading I am thinking of going to visit some of the readers of Leaves of Healing and Gospel Messengers whom I have never met and also those with whom I have met before but not for several years.

I want to assure you of my daily prayers for all of Zion. I send my Christian love to all.

Your Brother in Christ,
Elder Murton

Letter dated February 14th
from Edgar & Nettie Mahon, South Africa:

Dear Brother Roger,

Peace be to thee and to the church in Zion. We trust that you folk had a happy Christmas and that the New Year will be full of opportunities and blessings in the service of the Lord.

First of all, we want to say thank you most sincerely for the booklets "This We Believe". We have been following the articles in the Leaves of Healing and wanted to suggest you put them into a book - and you did, before we could even suggest it! When we received the first one, we were *thrilled* and wanted to write for a few more copies so that we could translate them into some of the African languages. Again you were one step ahead of us. Thank you so much. We are getting them translated into Zulu and Sotho for use here and into Chichewu for Malawi.

During the last few months I have been down to Zululand twice to visit the congregations of the C.C.C. Both times the attendances were very good and, as we visited with the folks, talked to them and expounded the Word to them, we could not help but feel that it was all worthwhile, for they literally drink in all the teaching one can give. I have learned many of their ways and they accept me and thus the message that I bring. Last time when I left many of them had tears in their eyes and kept asking when I would come again with 'Netta to visit them.

The folk in Malawi wrote recently stating that the Government required all churches to be registered. They have therefore registered in the name of 'The Christian Catholic Church of Malawi'. We trust this is in order. We have also asked them to keep a book for each congregation telling how and when it was started and listing the members. We thought this would be helpful. If you are able to visit us, they would dearly love to be included in your itinerary.

They are at present busy translating an Introductory Correspondence Bible Study Course that we have compiled and used for many years. As they send the lessons back, the Lees type them and send them back to the Christians in Malawi who then study the material and write an exam on each lesson. This is proving a real blessing and help spiritually.

Thank you too for the tapes of the opening of the Convocation and the Messiah. We appreciated this so much - and almost felt we were right there

with you. A copy of your Newsletter arrived yesterday. Even though we do not know many of the folk mentioned, we ENJOYED receiving them and appreciate them thoroughly. Thank you for the trouble you go to to get them to us.

We are still hoping that your proposed visit to this country is going to be a reality in the near future. Depending on the time you have here, we shall arrange an itinerary for you to visit as many of the CCC folk as possible - and do a bit of sight seeing at the same time. Then Edgar could leave with you and take you to the work in Malawi on your way home if you wish. We are looking for the Lord's definite seal upon these plans. We will be thrilled to have you and know your folk will too!

We often think of you folk and the happy fellowship we had together when we were there. We do hope that it will not be long before we see one another face-to-face once more so we can share together the wonderful things the Lord has done.

May the Lord continue to bless you richly. Our love and greetings to all our friends and loved ones. Please convey our grateful thanks to them all once again for all their love and faithfulness to us.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Rev. E.H. Mahon

Herbert Maynard Honored

At the annual Father and Son Banquet, held on February 21st in the Mintern Memorial Gym, Mr. Herbert Maynard was presented the MAN OF THE YEAR award by Mr. Richard Anderson, Director of Youth. This award is given each year to a man who has distinguished himself in dedication to Christ and faithfulness in some area of service in the church. The main purpose of the award is to call the attention of our youth to those whose lives serve as models in devotion to Christ and faithfulness of service.

Mr. Herbert Maynard ("Herb") has displayed a most beautiful spirit of love and self-giving and faithfulness in a bus ministry for thirty-five years. This responsibility has included picking up and taking home both children and adults for Sunday Bible School, the Worship and Vesper Services, and for Wednesday Prayer Meeting, plus Vacation Bible School and other church functions and outings. Herb has also driven many bus loads of children and young people to Camp Zion and back, a distance of 235 miles from Zion. He has also seen to the safety, servicing and cleanliness of the bus, which largely accounts for the many years of safe and excellent ser-



Herb Maynard being presented the Man of the Year award by Rick Anderson, Director of Youth.

vice we have had from our busses. His spirit of love and patience has been especially manifest to the handicapped and elderly and has endeared him to them.

The Man of the Year Award is also a small way of saying "Thank You" to those who faithfully serve our Lord in the church. Without such willing service, there could be no church.

The Banquet was attended by two hundred thirty fathers and sons and was served by the ladies of the church. Entertainment and ministry was provided by the 3½ M Company—two young men who provided music, mirth, and ministry of the Word. They were outstanding—as was the food and the entire evening.

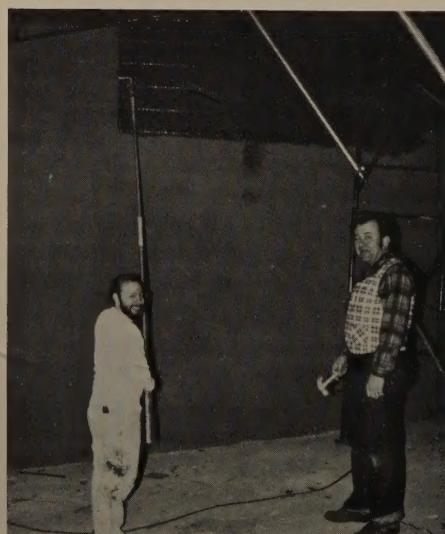
Christian Arts Auditorium Nearing Completion

Dedication of the new Christian Arts Auditorium has been set for April 27, 1980, though much has to be completed before that date. Many projects, such as painting, pouring concrete on the catwalks and storage spaces above the stage floor area, laying floor tile, and decking the stage area are being handled by volunteer labor on Saturdays. Thirty men showed up one Saturday and spread seventy gallons of paint on the walls and steel beams and concreted the upper storage areas. The seats are presently being installed, the organ is ready to be installed as soon as the stage decking has been completed.

Our biggest delay of work has been getting delivery and installation of the steel turn-tables. Delivery dates have come and gone several times and unless we get these soon, our Passion Play rehearsals and preparations will be

severely handicapped. Pray that this part may be completed very soon.

The April issue of Leaves of Healing will contain more information and pictures of the building.



Long handled paint rollers helped speed the job along.



Ken Anthony painting steel beams.



Pouring concrete into bucket to be hoisted to storage areas and catwalk above.